

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 SY-05 OPR-02 USSS-00 AID-05 MCT-01 OMB-01
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-----191402Z 094268 /60

R 190910Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6567
INFO AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 0234

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS: PINT, PINS, CE
SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT SUPPORTER SHOT AT IN JAFFNA

REF: 76 COLOMBO A-97

1. THE SRI LANKA FREEDOM PARTY (SLFP) "ORGANIZER "(LOCAL PARTY LEADER AND POTENTIAL ELECTORIAL CANDIDATE) FOR THE UDUVIL CONSTITUENCY IN THE JAFFNA PENINSULA WAS SHOT AT, BUT NOT HIT, BY UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS RECENTLY. THE ATTACKERS ARE ASSUMED TO HAVE BEEN TAMIL EXTREMISTS AND POLITICAL OPPONENTS OF THE SLFP. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SHOOTING LIES IN THE CONTINUING STTEMPT BY TAMIL RADICAL SEPARATISTS, MOSTLY YOUNG MEN, TO TERRORIZE ANY MEMBERS OF THE RULING SLFP WHO ATTEMPT TO CAMPAIGN FOR THE PARTY IN THE TAMIL AREAS. THIS RECENT SHOOTING RECALLS THE ASSASSINATION OF JAFFNA MAYOR ALFRED DURAIYAPPAH (AN SLFP MAN) IN JULY 1975 HIS ALLEGED ATTACKERS GO ON TRIAL SHORTLY- (SEE SEPTEL), THE WOUNDING OF DISTRICT POLITICAL AUTHORITY AND SLFP M.P. C. ARULAMPALAM IN AUGUST 1976 AND SEVERAL OTHER SHOOTINGS OF PARTY CAMPAIGNERS IN 1976. ALL
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VICTIMS HAVE BEEN TAMILS.

2. WITH ELECTIONS DUE SOMETIME BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1977, THE TAMIL EXTREMISTS MAY TRY TO MAKE GOOD ON THEIR BOAST THAT THEY WILL NOT ALLOW ANY CANDIDATES UNACCEPTABLE TO THEMSELVES (THAT IS, NON-MEMBERS OF THE TAMIL UNITED LIBERATION FRONT-TULF) TO CONTEST IN THE TAMIL- MAJORITY AREAS IN THE NORTH

OF SRI LANKA. IN ANY EVENT ,
IT IS CONSIDERED POSSIBLE THAT TULF CANDIDATES COULD
SWEEP ALL THOSE SEATS FAIRLY EASILY EVEN WITH OPPOSITION
FROM WHAT THE TULF LIKES TO CALL THE "SINHALESE PARTIES
OF THE SOUTH"-- THE SLFP AND ITS MAJOR OPPOSITION, THE UNITED
NATIONAL PARTY.

3. COMMENTS: WHILE THE RADICAL YOUTHS OF THE JAFFNA
PENINSULA APPEAR TO SUPPORT THE TULF AS "THEIR "POLITICAL
PARTY, IT DOES NOT THEREFORE FOLLOW THAT THE TULF APPROVES
OF OR AUTHORIZES THEIR OCCASIONAL VIOLENCE ALTHOUGH THE
TULF IS OFFICIALLY ON RECORD IN FAVOR OF SEPARATISM,
THE PARLIAMENTARY LEADERSHIP OF THE PARTY IS GENERALLY ELDERLY
AND CONSERVATIVE. THEY HAVE NO REAL STOMACH FOR VIOLENT
TACTICS DESIGNED TO BREAK UP THE STATE IN WHICH THEY HAVE
LIVED FOR MANY YEARS AND IN WHICH THEY HAVE A GREATER
STAKE THEN DO THEIR YOUNG COUNTERPARTS. THE REAL SECURITY
PROBLEM FOR THE GOVERNMENT IS THE YOUTH, WHO ARE BECOMING
INCREASINGLY UNEMPLOYABLE AS MORE AND MORE JOBS
REQUIRE FLUENCY IN THE SINHALESE LANGUAGE.

4. THE SHOOTING INCIDENT REPORTED HERE IS NOT IN
ITSELF A MAJOR EVENT; IT IS MERELY ANOTHER INDICATION
OF THE INCREASING EXTREMIST TAMIL CHALLENGE TO THE
GOVERNMENT'S CONTROL IN THE NORTH. THE SEPARATIST MOVEMENT HAS
SEEMED RELATIVELY DORMANT RECENTLY BUT, AS THE SHOOTING DEMONSTRATES,
IT HAS CERTAINLY NOT DISAPPEARED FROM THE SCENE.
REED

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Message Attributes

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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 19-Jan-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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